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The Effects of Parent Workshops on the Home Literacy Environments of Urban Prekindergarten Children

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THE EFFECTS OF PARENT WORKSHOPS
ON THE HOME LITERACY ENVIRONMENTS
OF URBAN PREKINDERGARTEN CHILDREN

THESIS

Submitted to the Graduate Committee of the
Department of Education and Human Development
State University of New York
College at Brockport
In Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Science in Education

by
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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to determine if a series of parent workshops based on early literacy development would empower parents to provide their prekindergarten children with increased literature-rich materials and experiences within their homes.

The fifteen subjects were the parents of prekindergarten students attending an urban school in western New York. The subjects attended a series of parent workshops which focused on incorporating literature events into everyday life activities. The subjects completed a pre survey and post survey. This researcher-designed survey was used as a pre-assessment and post-assessment to determine the quantity of literature-rich materials which were present and activities which occurred within each subject's home.

This study shows an effective model for a parent workshop directed at helping urban prekindergarten parents develop their children's language and literacy skills in their home environment. The results of this study indicated that parents did provide for more literacy development to occur. It is apparent from the survey results, that the workshop participants facilitated an increased awareness of the text in their children's everyday lives.

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CHAPTER I

Statement of the Problem

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to determine if a series of parent workshops based on early literacy development would empower parents to provide their prekindergarten children with increased literature-rich materials and experiences within their homes.

Need for the Study

Research has determined that many urban families are reluctant about participating in their children's education (Lewis, 1997). There are many factors which contribute to urban families' reluctance to participate in parent programs. Urban parents have often experienced school failure themselves. Many urban parents feel they are unable to provide for their children's educational growth due to the lack of resources available in their homes (Lewis, 1992). In the research it is evident that children born into families where parents experienced school failure often do poorly in school themselves (Neuman, Hagedorn, Celano & Daly, 1995).

The research also clearly states the need for parents to understand the important role they play in their child's development

of literacy. Parental involvement is a crucial element in a child's early literacy development (Shepston & Jensen, 1996). Research has determined that urban parents often wait until kindergarten or first grade to become involved with their children's literacy development at home (Purcell-Gates, 1996). It is critical that all parents understand the importance of the early literacy development which occurs in their homes. Parents need to develop an awareness of the multitude of literature-rich materials and experiences that they may already have in their homes and can incorporate into their everyday lives. Research has clearly proven that children whose homes provided them with literature-rich experiences prior to beginning kindergarten would be ready to grow as both readers and writers (Shepston & Jensen, 1996).

Therefore, parents in urban populations need to be given the opportunity to truly understand the important role they play in their children's early literacy development. This study examined the home literacy environment of prekindergarten children before and after parental participation in a parent workshop series. The parent workshop focused on specific activities which enabled parents to create literacy activities as a part of everyday life in and around their

homes.

Research Questions

The data obtained from the study were intended to answer the following questions:

1. How much literature related material is present and available in the homes of urban prekindergarten children, prior to and after parent participation in a literacy workshop?
2. How frequently do literacy events and interactions occur in the home environments of urban prekindergarten children, prior to and after parent participation in a literacy workshop?

Limitations of the Study

Enrollment in a prekindergarten program is optional in New York State for all non handicapped children. All of the prekindergarten parents in this study made an effort to enroll their children in this prekindergarten program. Also, parents were invited, not required, to attend this workshop series.

CHAPTER II

Review of the Literature

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to determine if a series of parent workshops based on early literacy development would empower parents to provide their prekindergarten children with increased literature-rich materials and experiences within their homes.

Importance of Home Environment

Much research has been conducted to support the important role that parents play in a child's successful literacy development. In a study conducted by Shepston and Jensen (1996), it was found that "students who were regularly involved with their families in literacy related activities had higher levels of reading achievement than students who were not involved" (p. 5). Webb (1997) determined that, "parents are the child's first and most important teacher and that, in general, successful students are those who receive positive support from parents and other significant adults on a long term basis" (p. 16).

The family support given to children prior to the beginning of school has been closely examined through the research. In a

literature-rich home environment, children, "frequently are read to, see others reading, are provided with accessible reading and writing materials and encouraged to talk and answer questions" (Saracho, 1997, p. 202). The design of a young child's home environment has received much attention in current research. Clark (1976), Clay (1980), Leichter (as cited in Goelman, Oberg & Smith, 1984) and Phillips (1990) identified the home as an important place for early literacy development to occur. A child's literacy success was directly related to "the accessibility of many books and other print materials as well as availability to the child of writing materials including pens, pencils, crayons and paper" (Shepston & Jensen, 1996, p. 6).

The importance of other literacy events which occur in the home environment is also evident in the research. Teale (as cited in Goelman, Oberg & Smith, 1984) found that preschool children who were read to benefited through improved readiness and increased success in school. In a study of low income children whose parents read to them as preschoolers, the subjects had a more extensive vocabulary in fourth grade than their peers who were not read to. Weinberger's longitudinal study (1996) concluded that children who

had a favorite book at age three will attain significantly higher literacy development by age seven than those three year old children who did not have a favorite book. Parents also play an important role as a model when they utilize literacy in everyday life. "When home and school synchronize their emphasis on motivation and learning with children a mutually beneficial relationship is formed" (Decker, Gregg & Decker, 1994, p 83). Parental involvement has also been proven to "strengthen family togetherness and promote greater community awareness" (Decker, et al., p 83).

Urban Realities

Specific characteristics were determined to contribute to the literacy development of young urban children. These children, in their homes and neighborhoods in urban Baltimore had opportunities which encouraged their "familiarity with print, knowledge of the world, awareness of sounds of language, competence in telling and sharing stories and orientation toward the value of literacy" (Serpell, Baker, & Sonnenschein, 1995, p. 12). All of these opportunities needed to occur repeatedly in the children's homes in order for the children to develop mastery of such competencies. In a more

recent study involving the same subjects, it was found that “prekindergarten children did better on tasks which directly tapped their knowledge of the print found in their homes” (Sonnenschein, Baker, Scher, Fernandez-Fein & Munsterman, 1996, p. 42).

The Baltimore research also identified three valuable components for early literacy development: phonological awareness, narrative competence and orientation to print. Phonological awareness allows a young child to hear the components of sounds in words and he/she is more likely to read well. Narrative competence was also found to be important for early literacy development. Children who listened to and retold stories improved this narrative competence. The third component identified as important to early literacy development was orientation to print. Children who understood that letters and word were meaningful were developing this orientation to print (Sonnenschein, et al., 1996).

The Baltimore study further determined that care givers categorized literacy into three distinct areas: entertainment, a set of skills to be learned or an intrinsic part of day to day life. Through home visits and observations, the research team identified literacy to

occur most frequently as entertainment in the homes of the prekindergarten children in this urban study. These children and families were observed reading together and using print socially as a form of enjoyment (Sonnenschein, Baker, Serpell, Scher, Fernandez-Fein & Munsterman, 1996).

In a descriptive study conducted by Pruceil-Gates (1996), the relationship between literacy knowledge and patterns of print used in the homes of low income urban families was documented and described. Her research found that children's understanding of print was related to "the frequency of literacy events in the home and to their personal focus and involvement in the literacy event" (p. 407). She also found evidence that parents became much more involved in their children's literacy development during kindergarten and first grade, when formal literacy instruction began in school. "Parents of kindergarten and first grade children were observed reading to their children ten times more than the parents of preschoolers" (p. 424).

Neuman and Gallagher (1994) examined the effects of coaching urban teen mothers about the activities which they could facilitate in their homes to promote their children's literacy development. The coaching sessions resulted in "playful

opportunities for mothers and children to engage in behaviors that used language and literacy for functional purposes," (p 399). The young mothers received information about the importance of pretend play and labeling familiar items in their homes.

Overcoming Obstacles

Many obstacles stand in the way of establishing effective communication between families and schools. In 1955, sixty percent of families were comprised of a working father and stay at home mother. In 1992, only six percent of American families were in similar situations (Hodgkinson, 1992). In 1992, sixty percent of mothers of preschool aged children worked at least part time outside of the home (Hodgkinson, 1992). In *The State of America's Children*, published through the Children's Defense Fund in 1991, it was cited that "every 5 minutes an infant is born to a teenage mother who already has a child" and that "every 64 seconds an infant is born to a teenage mother" (p. viii).

Parent involvement in schools is examined in a study of teenage mothers in an African American community. This study, conducted by Neuman, Hagedorn, Celano, and Daly (1995) stated that, "children from minority homes continue to lag far behind their

non minority peers in written language" (p. 803). Children born to teen mothers are "likely to suffer learning difficulties, suggesting a potential intergenerational transmission of low basic skills, low educational attainment, and poverty" (Neuman, Hagedorn, Celano, & Daly, 1995, p. 805). The roles of teachers, parents and community organizations were defined as working collaboratively to effectively meet the needs of young children. Through focus group conversations of the young teen mothers, four distinct beliefs about their children's schooling emerged. The subjects desired that schools teach basic life skills as well as academic skills. The subjects also identified the need for their children's safety while in school. The third belief focused on a need to trust and feel respected by their children's teacher. Teachers who, "were nurturing, maintained order, were willing to attend to children's individual needs, and taught them skills" (Neuman, et al., 1995, p 820) were identified as good teachers by the teen mothers. The fourth and final belief shared by the group of teen mothers in this study was to be positive role models for their children. This study concludes with recommendations for increased cultural understanding by educators and continued efforts to identify common goals to

construct trusting relationships between home and school.

In a study conducted by Lewis (1992), it was identified that only “one in ten low income parents participated in parent teacher organizations” (p. 4). Parent involvement has historically been defined as what parents should do. Societal changes have shifted the definition of parental involvement to “how to form genuine school family partnerships” (Lewis, 1992, p. 3). Lewis identified several factors which have contributed to poor parent school relationships. First, low income families often were unable to provide their children with literature-rich home environments due to a lack of resources. Many young mothers in this study felt alienated from schools, as a direct result of their lack of school success. “Eighty percent of teen mothers drop out of school when they are pregnant” (Lewis, 1992, p. 4). The final obstacle to parent involvement in schools is that parent teacher communication is often one way, through notes, letters and announcements sent home with children.

It is the responsibility of the teacher to encourage parental involvement. Many “parents want to be effectively involved in their children’s education” (Hoover-Dempsey, Bassler & Burrow, 1995, p.

447). Parents are often unsure of how exactly they can help. When teachers support and encourage parental involvement, parent anxieties about helping their children at home tend to diffuse (Hoover-Dempsey, Bassler & Burrow, 1995).

The Lewis (1992) study identified several areas in which parental involvement could be encouraged. Parents needed support in understanding how to establish a home environment which supported their children's learning. Schools also needed to share information about curriculum and individual student growth. Parents also needed the opportunity to volunteer in their children's schools. School decision-making was another way in which parents could become involved. This study identified that these factors would contribute to the empowerment of urban parents. "Parents who feel the school is actively trying to involve them have a more positive attitude about schools" (Lewis, p. 5). The study concluded with the encouragement of urban schools to "go beyond traditional strategies that depend on parents' initiative and see themselves as educators of families" (Lewis, 1992, p. 6).

Many urban communities are beginning to offer programs to low income families. The goals of these programs are to involve

parents in their children's growth and to develop a positive relationship between the home and school. One such program in Flint, Michigan invited parents of children from birth to four years of age to attend a weekly workshop. Parenting techniques, community resources, development of positive attitudes towards school and awareness of child development were the main focus of the program. At the end of three years, parent feedback clearly showed, "increased feelings of confidence as parents, increasingly positive perceptions of the community school and growing positive perceptions of their children's competence" (Webb, 1997, p. 18).

In a study of urban parents whose children were four or five years old, most parents held themselves accountable for their children's moral development, but held schools responsible for their children's literacy development (Serpell, Sonnenschein, Baker, Hill, Goddard-Truitt, & Danseco, 1997).

Summary

The research identified the need for parents to clearly understand the important role they play in their children's literacy attainment and success. Preschool aged children will benefit most from a home environment which is print rich and encourages literacy

activities. Unfortunately the research also clearly points out that urban parents frequently feel alienated from schools for various reasons. Early childhood educators today are given the responsibility to reach out to the parents of preschool children and empower these same parents to create a home environment which will facilitate the development of literacy.

CHAPTER III

Design of the Study

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to determine if a series of parent workshops based on early literacy development would empower parents to provide their prekindergarten children with increased literature-rich materials and experiences within their homes.

Methodology

Subjects

The subjects in this study were 15 parents of prekindergarten children attending an urban school. Of the fifteen parents participating, fourteen homes were represented. There were two different prekindergarten classes: a morning session and an afternoon session. The families represented in this study live in various city neighborhoods. Ninety-four percent of the children attending this prekindergarten program qualified for a free lunch or breakfast. The parents who attended the workshop series were 66.67% African American, 26.67% Hispanic and 6.67% Caucasian. The relationship to the prekindergarten child of the workshop participants was 80% mothers, 13.33% fathers and 6.67% grandmothers.

Materials

A researcher designed survey was used as a pre-assessment and post-assessment to determine the quantity of literature-rich materials which were present and activities which occurred within each subject's home.

Procedure

Each workshop was held twice, once during the school day and once during the evening, for three consecutive weeks. The workshop leader was the researcher. There was a school sentry on duty for the evening workshops to ensure the safety of the participants in their arrival and departure from the school building. Each workshop lasted two hours. Child supervision was provided by paraprofessionals who worked at the school. A drawing for door prizes occurred at each workshop session. Items such as gift certificates for groceries, tickets to a children's music concert, children books, magnetic letters, crayons, coloring books, alphabet blocks and writing bags were used as door prizes.

Recruitment

Invitations were distributed to the parents of 50 children attending prekindergarten at the host school and the parents of 200

children attending prekindergarten at other sites within the same school district. The parents of children attending the host school also received reminders about the workshops the day prior to each workshop and in a weekly class newsletter.

Program Description

During session one, parents completed the pre-workshop survey. Parents were given information about public library locations, hours, special programs for children and requirements to attain a public library card. The presenter also modeled how to make the kitchen and trips to the store learning experiences for prekindergarten children. A cookbook, coupons, canned and boxed goods, grocery list and magnetic letters were used to model this. Parents then created a name alphabet book for their child. A file of clip art was created for parents. This file, divided into twenty six compartments, had clip art of familiar objects for parent use. Parents colored, cut, glued, laminated and bound their books. Door prizes were distributed and parents were encouraged to share their materials with their children.

At the second workshop, parents first discussed the literacy events which occurred in their kitchens and on trips to the store. Trips

to the library were also discussed. Presenter modeled ways in which parents can help their children's oral language development through daily conversations. The presenter also pointed out opportunities which develop print awareness when traveling by car or bus (reading business, traffic and street signs). Parents then created a velcro finger glove and puppets for many different finger plays. Parents were encouraged to use these materials at home with their child and door prizes were distributed.

For the third and final workshop, parents were encouraged to share information about their experiences with the materials they created in the first two workshop sessions. Conversations about trips to the store, public library and finding print in our everyday environment were also facilitated. The presenter shared the materials in homes that a child could utilize for dramatic play and that dramatic play or pretending encouraged both oral and written language development. Parents were encouraged to give their children coupons, empty food containers, blank paper, carry out and delivery menus, writing instruments and catalogs to encourage pretending. Parents then made an alphabet book for their child. Door prizes were distributed. Parents were reminded about the post

workshop survey they would be receiving in a few weeks.

Analysis of Data

The data were analyzed in a quantitative and descriptive fashion. The pre-workshop and post-workshop surveys were quantitatively compared for each of the fifteen participants. The verbal and written comments made throughout the workshop were analyzed in a descriptive manner for significant content.

Research Questions

The data obtained from the study were intended to answer the following questions:

1. How much literature related material is present and available in the homes of urban prekindergarten children, prior to and after parent participation in a literacy workshop?
2. How frequently do literacy events and interactions occur in the home environments of urban prekindergarten children, prior to and after parent participation in a literacy workshop?

CHAPTER IV

Analysis of Data

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to determine if a series of parent workshops based on early literacy development would empower parents to provide their prekindergarten children with increased literature-rich materials and experiences within their homes.

Results

The overall results show a high percentage of parental participation at the host school. At the host school, fifty families received invitations to attend the workshop. Fourteen parents from the host school attended (31.11%). A lower percentage of parents from other district schools participated (.4%). Parents from three other district preschools were invited to attend (250 parents), only one of these parents attended the workshop. Of the twenty-one parents who returned fliers indicating they would attend the workshop, fifteen attended (71.42%).

Overall workshop participation was 86.67% female and 13.33% male. Forty percent of the participants took part in all three workshop sessions. Thirty-three percent of the participants took part

in two of the three workshop sessions. Twenty-seven percent of the participants took part in one of the three workshop sessions. Two workshop participants (13.33%) attended more than three workshops by attending both the day and evening sessions.

The survey results quantitatively defined the amount of many literature related items available in the homes of the workshop participants before and after participation in the workshop series (Table 1). The most significant increase occurred with alphabet blocks (10.87 per household in the pre- survey and 16.4 per household in the post survey). An increase in the number of magnetic letters, flash cards, children's dictionaries, books on tape and grown up magazines was also present in a comparison of the pre- and post workshop surveys.

The survey results indicated that some literacy events occurred more frequently after parent participation in the workshop series (Table 2): On the post survey, 46.67% of the participants indicated that their child engaged in reading store, road and traffic signs more frequently after the workshop. Some parents (20%) also indicated that their children helped more frequently with household chores. Thirteen percent of the workshop participants stated their

child observed an adult reading in their home more frequently in the post workshop survey. These data also showed that children went to the store more frequently (13.33%) with the workshop participants.

There was also a decrease in the frequency of some literacy events which occurred in the homes (Table 3). The post workshop survey results indicated that 20% of the participants discussed the books they read with their children less frequently. In 13.33% of the homes included in the study, prekindergarten children were observed reciting the alphabet and telling or writing their own stories less frequently.

The parent workshop evaluation (see Appendix) contained many valuable pieces of data worth noting. Ten of the fifteen (66.67%) workshop participants completed this form at the last workshop. Parents responses to the question, "Please mention briefly the areas of information which you found most useful," were meaningful to the purpose of this study. One parent stated, "...we could use simple things around our house to help our children learn to read and count." Another parent responded with, "how to teach my child more successfully." In question four, parents were asked to share an activity they would do with their child. Participants shared

they would: “use hand puppets and cook,”

“ make alphabet flash cards to help her identify the letters of the alphabet,”

“go over the book I made here,”

“use the puppet, read ABC books and visit the library,”

“take my child shopping”

“I will try to point out as many signs, etc. that we drive by and try to explain his questions more”

“five finger poems”

“Alphabet, colors and I will try to go grocery shopping with them.”

Of the ten parents who responded to the workshop evaluation, eight (80%) would definitely recommend this workshop to other parents. Nine of the ten (90%) rated the workshop’s content, presentation and handouts as “superior”. One suggestion was made to extend the length of time for the workshops so that more materials could have been created.

Table 1

Mean Rating for Literacy Related Items in Households

item	pre-survey	post survey	increase/decrease
	mean	mean	
scissors	2.14	2.2	+.06
stuffed animals	23.0	20.56	-2.44
alphabet blocks	10.87	16.4	+5.73
children's books	36.11	21.1	-15.01
VCR	1.47	1.73	+.26
Magnetic letters	8.6	12.47	+3.87
paper	51.71	45	-6.71
pencils	12.25	7.4	-4.85
crayons	38	25.33	-12.67
newspaper	.43	.31	.12
computer	.33	.2	-.13
flash cards	11.87	13.92	+2.05
markers	9.0	3.69	-5.31
grown up books	12.5	9.56	-2.94
children's			
dictionary	.5	.93	+.43

(continued)

Table 1(continued)

Mean Rating for Literacy Related Items in Households

item	pre-survey mean	post survey mean	increase/decrease
children's books			
on tape	2.86	4.87	+2.01
grown up			
magazines	3.42	8.67	+5.25
coloring books	6.2	8.15	+1.95
tape player	1.8	1.73	-.07
television	2.8	3.13	+.33

Table 2

Increased Occurrences of Home Literacy Events

N = 15

Statement	more frequently	less frequently	no change	% increase
1- You read to your child	4	3	8	6.67%
2-Child pretends/ tries to read	1	0	14	6.67%
3-Child goes to the store with you	4	2	9	13.33%
4-Members of your household leave notes for one another	3	2	10	6.67%
5-Your child helps with household jobs	5	2	8	20.00%

(continued)

Table 2 (continued)

Increased Occurrences of Home Literacy Events

N = 15

Statement	more frequently	less frequently	no change	% increase
6-Your child observes an adult reading	4	2	9	13.33%
7-You talk to your child about TV programs	2	1	12	6.67%
8-You make a shopping list	3	2	10	6.67%
9-Your child asks for help to read store, traffic or road signs	8	1	6	46.67%

Table 3

Decreased Occurrences of Home Literacy Events

N = 15

Statement	more frequently	less frequently	no change	% decrease
1- Your child asks to be read to	3	4	8	6.67%
2- Your child tries to tell or write his/ her own story	2	4	9	13.33%
3-Your child recites the alphabet	2	4	9	13.33%
4- You and your child discuss a book you've read together	3	6	6	20.00%

CHAPTER V

Discussion

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to determine if a series of parent workshops based on early literacy development would empower parents to provide their prekindergarten children with increased literature-rich materials and experiences within their homes.

Conclusions

The results of this study seem to support the use of parent workshops as an effective tool for increasing the amount of literature-rich materials and the quantity of literature-rich experiences in the homes of prekindergarten children. The survey responses also indicated a high interest in providing continued opportunities for parents to learn how to help their children's literacy development in the home. One area for opportunity to improve the effectiveness of the workshops was to involve a higher percentage of parents in the workshops.

The most significant increase in home literacy events was reading store traffic and road signs (46.67 %). At each workshop session, the importance of environmental text was discussed with

participants. Models of reading environmental print were shared with participants as well. There were also decreases in the occurrences of home literacy events. The most significant decrease (20%) was for parents reading and discussing a story together. One possible reason for this may be that parents made an effort to incorporate literature related materials in their everyday lives and not just when sharing a story. Another possible reason for the number of decreases in the occurrences of literacy events on the post survey may be that parents completed the post survey at home. The pre-survey was completed at the first workshop. At that time, parents may have felt rushed and not had time to truly respond to the survey questions.

The interest and participation of the parents in the workshop series implies that other such opportunities would be welcomed by parents of prekindergarten children. The parents seemed genuinely interested in learning how to help their children's literacy development at home and what was developmentally appropriate for their children. While at the workshops, participants discussed and shared ideas for establishing a family schedule and their families' participation in community events. Some parents shared information

about health concerns (e.g. bed wetting and new immunization laws) These naturally occurring conversations seemed of great interest and value to all participants. The opportunity to talk to other parents of children at the same age level seemed to be of benefit to many workshop participants. One participant was a grandmother who was raising her grandchildren. Her suggestions and advice as an experienced parent were welcomed by many of the younger parents. Some participants exchanged phone numbers in an effort to meet the transportation needs of other group members.

The attendance at the evening sessions was higher than at the day sessions. Many of the participants who attended the evening session were employed during the day session. The offering of each workshop twice seemed to be of benefit to many of the participants. They were provided with the opportunity to attend either session, based on their specific time constraints.

The use of door prizes seemed to encourage many participants to continue attending the workshop series. Parents were pleased to receive magnetic letters, coloring books and other literature related materials to use at home with their children.

Implications for Schools

There are many implications for schools in regards to the effectiveness of parent workshops. Parents are interested in learning ways to support their children's success in school. Since the majority of the parents who attended the workshop were from the host school, it is important to offer such opportunities at each school. Many factors contributed to the success of the workshop. Providing free child care for the participating families made it possible for the majority of the parents to attend the workshop series. The use of door prizes and providing snacks also was an incentive for many parents to attend the workshop series.

Implications for Research

For further research in this area, it may be interesting to survey the participating parents at a future date to determine if the increasing trends continued. It would also be of value to track the school success of the children whose parents participated in the workshop series. A comparison study examining the long term literacy success of children whose parents participated with the children of parents who did not participate may also be an area for further research. Other research is also needed to continue to

identify opportunities for involving a higher percentage of parents in their children's academic growth and development.

Summary

This study shows an effective model for a parent workshop directed at helping urban prekindergarten parents develop their children's language and literacy skills in their home environment. The information shared with parents was specific and directly addressed areas for literacy development in their homes and everyday lives. The materials created by parents used simple, common classroom items (crayons, markers, glue sticks, index cards). This workshop series could be very easily replicated for use in other parent programs.

The results of this study seem to indicate that parents did provide for more literature development to occur in specific areas. Reading store, road and traffic signs was one item that was specifically discussed at the workshop series. Models and examples of this were shared with the participants. It is apparent from the survey results, that the workshop participants facilitated an increased awareness of the text in their children's everyday lives. Many of the written comments also indicated that the children had more

opportunities for assisting with cooking and shopping at the grocery store.

Limitations of the Study

The number of subjects (N = 15) is a small sample. The fifteen parents who attended this workshop series made the choice to enroll their child in prekindergarten program. These parents also made an effort to participate in the workshop series. Some participants did not attend all three workshops. Some participants attended both the day and evening sessions in order to create supplemental materials. Parents who were unable to attend cited many reasons for their lack of participation: lack of transportation, conflicting work schedules and family illness.

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APPENDIX

Parent Workshop Evaluation
(used for all parent workshops in district)

1. Did today's workshop meet your expectations?

1	2	3	4	5
not at all	somewhat	adequately	to a great extent	fully

2. Would you recommend this workshop to other parents?

1	2	3	4	5
no	not unless there were major changes		yes, with some modifications	definitely

3. Please mention briefly the area(s) of information which you found most useful.

4. As a result of this workshop, please share an activity you plan to do with your child.

5. Please circle your evaluation of today's workshop: the content, presentation and handouts.

BELOW AVERAGE	AVERAGE	ABOVE AVERAGE	SUPERIOR
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Dear Pre-K Parent,

Thank you again for participating in the prekindergarten parent workshop series. **PLEASE complete the attached survey and return it to me at School #_____ by this Friday.** When you return this to me, I will have a **surprise** for you to use at home with your child. Thank you so much for taking time to complete this survey. As always, feel free to contact me at school with any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Kristen Neckers

Activities in Your Home That Promote Literacy Development:

- Making a grocery list
- Sorting Coupons
- Reading from the grocery list
- Following directions from a recipe
- Recognize words from a recipe
- Finding specific food items in cupboards,
on store shelves, or in your refrigerator

Pre-K Parent Workshop #2:

- Sharing of Parent Facilitated Literature Activities
 - trips to public library
 - parent made books
 - parent created story gloves

- **Importance of Conversation**
 - When you speak with your child, you help to develop his/her verbal skills. This will help your child's vocabulary to grow also!

 - When traveling to and from place to place, many opportunities arise which encourage your child's understanding of the alphabet
 - reading traffic signs
 - reading billboards
 - reading names of stores / businesses

- **Sharing of Parent Facilitated Literature Activities**

- conversations with your child
- trips to public library
- parent made books
- parent created story gloves

- **Importance of Pretend/Dramatic Play**

Children enjoy pretending to be store clerks, bankers, waiters, teachers, firefighters, mailmen, etc. As children pretend to be many different things, they use language (both written and oral).

- Materials already present in your home which promote dramatic play:

- coupons
- empty food containers
- menus, blank
- pads of paper,
- writing instruments
- books

Prekindergarten Parent Workshop Presenter Outline

Session #1

- Sign In
- Registration Form
- Home literacy survey
- Two most important factors which contribute to reading success:
 - Phonemic awareness (hearing sounds)
 - Alphabet knowledge
- Shopping & Kitchen Literacy Related Activities:
 - writing & reading a grocery list
(sharing models - canned & boxed goods, cook books, recipe cards)
 - sorting coupons (looking at pictures & print)
 - recognizing products (in cupboard, refrigerator, etc.)
 - putting away groceries
 - locating specific food items (in cupboard, refrigerator, etc.)
 - reading & recognizing words from recipes
 - following multi step directions
- Distribute Public Library Branch & Card Information
- Explain clip art file
- Parents will create alphabet books using clip art file, markers, crayons, glue sticks, index cards
- Distribute door prizes
- Encourage parents to share materials they have made with their children

Prekindergarten Parent Workshop Presenter Outline

Session #2

- Welcome
 - sign in
- Discuss the importance of conversation
 - When you speak with your child, you help to develop his/her verbal skills.
This will help your child's vocabulary grow as well.
 - When traveling to and from place to place, many opportunities arise which encourage your child's understanding of the alphabet.
 - read traffic signs
 - reading names of businesses & stores
 - reading billboards
- Facilitate a group sharing session about trips to the store, visits to the library, working in the kitchen with children
- Share poetry & finger play puppet to be made at this session
- Door prizes distributed
- Reminder of next meeting time

Prekindergarten Parent Workshop Presenter Outline

Session #3

- Welcome
 - sign in
- Sharing of Parent facilitated Literature Activities
 - trips to the public library
 - parent made books
 - parent created story gloves
- Importance of Pretend/Dramatic Play

Children enjoy pretending to be store clerks, bankers, teachers, waiters, firefighters, mailmen, etc. As children pretend to be many different things, they use language (both written & oral).

Materials already present in your home which promote dramatic play:

- coupons
 - empty food containers
 - menus
 - blank paper
 - catalogs, store flyers
 - writing instruments
 - books
- Parents make name books using A-B-C clip art file
 - Door prize distribution
 - Thank you for participating

Prekindergarten Parent Survey

•The month and day of your birthday: ____/____

•Your relationship to the child attending prekindergarten:

mother father grandparent other:_____

•Age of child attending pre-K:_____

Do you have the following
Items in your home?

approximately
how many?

children's scissors	Yes	No	_____
stuffed animals	Yes	No	_____
alphabet blocks	Yes	No	_____
children's books	Yes	No	_____
VCR	Yes	No	_____
magnetic letter set	Yes	No	_____
paper for writing or coloring	Yes	No	_____
pencils	Yes	No	_____
crayons	Yes	No	_____
daily newspaper	Yes	No	_____
computer	Yes	No	_____
flashcards with letters or pictures	Yes	No	_____
markers	Yes	No	_____
grown up books	Yes	No	_____
children's dictionary	Yes	No	_____
children's books on tape	Yes	No	_____
grown up magazines	Yes	No	_____
coloring books	Yes	No	_____
tape player	Yes	No	_____
television	Yes	No	_____

Please complete the back also

Please indicate how often each of the following occur in your home:
 (Please mark an "X" below the most appropriate response)

	never	monthly	weekly	daily
You read to your child.....				
Your child asks to be read to.....				
Your child tries to tell or write his/her own story.....				
You watch T.V. with your child.....				
Your child pretends or tries to read to you.....				
Your child goes to the store with you.....				
Your child recites the alphabet.....				
Your child writes letters or words.....				
Members of your household leave notes for one another.....				
Your child helps with household jobs.....				
Your child visits the public library.....				
Your child observes an adult reading.....				
You & your child discuss a book you've read together.....				
You talk to your child about TV programs.....				
Your child plays board games.....				
You make a shopping list.....				
Your child asks for help to read store, traffic or road signs.....				
You write or read a letter to a relative or friend.....				